

## APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

### 2013 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

**Legal Applicant:** Youth Volunteer Corps

**Application ID:** 13ND146501

**Program Name:** Youth Volunteer CorpsEAP

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

#### Reviewers' Summary Comments:

(+) The applicant cites five research reports (Sum, 2011 and 2012; Hair, 2009; Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2012; and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation) and a number of data sources (Population Reference Bureau; U. S. Census Bureau; Bureau of Labor Statistics; and U. S. Department of Labor) to establish the need in eight states and their target communities.

(+) The applicant references and provides specific target community data that show: 15 to 40 percent of the children live in poverty; 11 to 37 percent of the youth do not complete high school, and 37 to 57.5 percent of the youth are unemployed or out of school. The foregoing data indicate the target population is economically disadvantaged.

(+) The applicant provides a compelling need to increase the job opportunities for 71 economically disadvantaged youth with service-learning projects. For instance, the average out of school rates for their target population in several states is 30% for ages 16-19 and 55% for youth ages 20-24, which is high.

(+) The applicant provides documented statistics for each of the eight target communities. For instance, one site, North Texas Youth Volunteer Corps in Dallas County, Texas is 22.3% Black and 38.2% Hispanic with a median household income of \$46,909 and 29% of children in poverty; 79% complete high school and the youth (age 16-24) unemployment/out of school rate is 58.5%.

(+) The applicant clearly describes AmeriCorps members' responsibilities and activities to recruit 3,752 disadvantaged youth as volunteers (opportunity youth), and train, manage them while also acting as role models. Summer and school-year activities are clearly delineated. Multiple specific examples provide clear insight into the activities of the AmeriCorps members.

(+) The applicant describes clear roles for AmeriCorps members and provides specific examples of the service-learning activities Members will be engaged in during their term of service. For example, the applicant will utilize eight full-time, 16 half-time, 17 minimum-time and 30 Education Award Only AmeriCorps members at eight affiliate sites. This request for Members will enable participating affiliates to increase opportunity youth recruitment and in most cases, double the number of Youth Volunteers participating in service-learning projects.

(+) The applicant provides both evidence-informed and evidence-based information to support the proposed interventions of service learning, training and support services, and positive relationships with adults. The applicant cites national data by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and the Department of Labor as well as an external evaluator's study of their own process and outcomes to support efficacy of the proposed interventions.

(+) The applicant provided clear information to support their position that service-learning intervention is an evidence-based teaching and learning strategy. Citing sources such as Learn and Serve America 2010, the U.S. Department of Labor 2012, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Kid's Count Policy Report 2012, the applicant discusses the importance of service-learning to workforce development and employability.

(+) The application clearly described their plan to use pre- and post-project surveys of affiliates and participants to measure the engagement of youth as volunteers and service delivery to include job training, employability, and career goals attained. They also described a survey currently in use to determine performance measure targets and key indicators expressed in quantitative and qualitative terms, which includes process points such as the relationship between the national office and affiliates, and recruitment efforts.

(-) The applicant does not indicate the factors contributing to the unemployment situation faced by youth in the eight target communities.

(-) Any change anticipated after the three-year grant cycle in youth unemployment at the proposed sites as established in the need section is not addressed by the applicant.